

DNREC's First State Heritage Park joins in Dover Days festivities May 4 and 5

DOVER – DNREC's First State Heritage Park will present "Favorite Pastimes" as the theme for the First State Heritage Park's monthly "First Saturday in the First State," during the annual Dover Days celebration on Saturday, May 5. The program will feature a variety of free events and activities. Visitors to The Green can also see the John Bell House during the "Archaeology – a Time Travelers Event," where they can visit an active dig site, and find out more about life in the past.

At the John Bell House, middle school students from the First State Club at Campus Community School will also help to transform it into an 18th century tavern for "A Traveler's Life: Getting from Here to There in the 18th Century." Visitors will experience some of the perils of travel in a themed obstacle course, and can try their hand at some typical tavern chores, as well as some games enjoyed as pastimes.

Here is a list of other programs and activities for First Friday and First Saturday in the First State:

First Friday, May 4

8:00 p.m.

- Join historical interpreters from DNREC's First State Heritage Park dressed in historic clothing for a brand new **lantern tour of the Old Methodist Cemetery**. The tour will feature a 19th century undertaker and a mourning widow who will share details about Victorian funeral practices. Tickets are \$10, and space is limited; call 302-739-9194 to reserve your spot.

First Saturday, May 5

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- **A Traveler's Life: Getting from Here to There in the 18th Century** (John Bell House on The Green)

Discover how Delaware's Revolutionary hero, Caesar Rodney, made his historic ride, and hear about the different methods of 18th century travel and the challenges and dangers an 18th century traveler faced.

- **Guided Tours of Delaware's Capitol** (411 Legislative Avenue)

Visit the building that has been home to the Delaware General Assembly since 1933. Photo ID is required for all adults entering the building.

- **Guided Tours of The Old State House** (25 The Green)

Tour this 1791 building that served as Delaware's capitol until 1933.

- **Sounds of War: Patriotic Music** (Johnson Victrola Museum, 375 S. New Street)

Guided tours will examine music's influence on American wars. Hear wartime music that was recorded by the Victor Talking Machine Company which is played on authentic Talking Machines.

- **Biggs Kids: Ladybug Mask** (Biggs Museum of American Art, 406 Federal Street)

Get crafty with the state's ladylike bug by making your own ladybug mask. For ages 5-10.

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- **Tours of the Governor's House** (Woodburn, 151 King's Highway)

Enjoy guided tours of the official residence of Delaware's Governor since 1965, and Hall House, the Governor's guest house.

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- **“Stories of The Green” Walking Tour** (Meet at the John Bell House on The Green)
For 300 years, The Green has been the center of commerce, politics, and civic life in Dover. Guided walks through the historic district reveal the people and events that left their mark on Dover’s history. Tours leave on the hour with the last tour leaving at 3:00 p.m.
- **Archaeology at the Bell House – A Time Travelers Archaeology Month Event** (John Bell House on The Green)
Visit the John Bell House and learn about its history, and the lives of those who spent time there in the 18th century. Archaeologists will use finds from the property to discuss everyday life in the past. Touch a piece of history and learn about the archaeological research process.

1:30 p.m.

- **Behind the Scenes Tour of the Delaware Public Archives** (121 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard)
This annual “behind the scenes” tour of the building offers the public a rare opportunity to learn more about the role of the archives, and see how the facility preserves and protects the records that are important to every Delawarean.

1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- **The Once and Future Courthouse: Historic Kent County Courthouse, Courtroom #1** (Meet at the front steps of the Old Courthouse at 38 The Green)
From the 1690s to the present, learn how this site transformed from a courthouse to a hotel and back again.

Each month during “First Saturdays in the First State,” the First State Heritage Park offers a variety of free programs at

each of the park's partner sites, including tours of the two capitol buildings in Delaware's capital city – the Old State House and Legislative Hall – hourly walking tours leaving from the John Bell House, and the monthly “Biggs Kids” program at the Biggs Museum of American Art. Exhibits are also on display at the Delaware Public Archives, the Johnson Victrola Museum, the First State Heritage Park Welcome Center and Galleries and the Biggs Museum.

Admission to all park sites and programs is free. Centrally-located free parking is available at the First State Heritage Park Welcome Center and Galleries, located at 121 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard North. For more information about “First Saturday” events and all First State Heritage Park programs, please call 302-739-9194 or visit www.destateparks.com/heritagepark. Information on all the events of Dover Days weekend, sponsored by Delaware's Quaint Villages, can be found at www.visitdelawarevillages.com.

The First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first urban “park without boundaries,” linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. The park is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, working in collaboration with city and county government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector.

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